

Message Text

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72

ACTION EUR-25

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8053

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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USNMR SHAPE

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CINCUSAFE

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1455

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR MARR NO

SUBJECT: NORWEGIAN LEFT QUESTION DEFENSE MINISTER

1. THE INTENTION OF NORWAY'S FAR LEFT TO USE ITS RECENTLY-GAINED VOICE IN THE STORTING FOR ATTACKING OR CASTING DOUBT ON NORWAY'S DEFENSE POLICIES WAS DEMONSTRATED ONCE MORE IN APRIL 3 QUESTION PERIOD. DEFENSE MINISTER FOSTERVOLL RESPONDED TO A SERIES OF INTERPELLATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE SOCIALIST ELECTORAL LEAGUE (SV) ON MATTERS RELATED TO NORWAY'S NATO MEMBERSHIP, BASE POLICY, AND PARTICIPATION IN NUCLEAR PLANNING.

2. SV REPRESENTATIVE ARENT HENRIKSEN ASKED WHEN THE DEFENSE COMMISSION WILL BE NAMED AND WHETHER ITS MANDATE WILL PERMIT EVALUATION OF SECURITY--POLITICAL ALTERNATIVES TO NATO MEMBERSHIP. FOSTERVOLL'S RESPONSE WAS THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS NOW CONSIDERING THE MANDATE AND COMPOSITION OF THE DEFENSE COMMISSION AND WILL PRESENT THE RESULT IN THE NEAR FUTURE; HE THEREFORE FELT IT WOULD BE IMPROPER TO ANSWER THE SECOND
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HALF OF HENDRIKSEN'S QUESTION AT THE PRESENT TIME.

(COMMENT: DEFENSE MINISTRY'S SECRETARY GENERAL HIMLE TOLD

DCM ON APRIL 4 THAT HE EXPECTED MANDATE OF THE COMMISSION WOULD BE SUFFICIENTLY BROAD TO ALLOW, BUT NOT REQUIRE, DISCUSSION OF NATO IF COMMISSION MEMBERS SHOULD DECIDE THIS IS DESIRABLE. FOSTERVOLL INITIALLY SAW UTILITY IN PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF THE ROLE OF NATO, BUT HE HAS SUBSEQUENTLY APPEARED MORE CAUTIOUS.)

3. SV MEMBER BERIT AAS, REFERRING TO A WEST GERMAN WHITE PAPER WHICH STATES THAT THE BUNDESWEHR HAS EIGHT WEAPONS DEPOTS IN NORWAY, ASKED WHETHER THERE WERE SPECIAL REGULATIONS CONCERNING THESE DEPOTS AND WHAT KIND OF RULES APPLY TO THE COOPERATION OF THE BUNDESWEHR IN THE DEFENSE OF SOUTH NORWAY. IN REPLY, THE DEFENSE MINISTER CITED THE APPLICABLE NORWEGIAN LAWS WHICH PERMIT THE STORING OF FUEL, AMMUNITION, AND MATERIEL FOR USE OF OTHER NATO COUNTRIES, INCLUDING THE FRG, IN ACCORDANCE WITH SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS WITH NORWAY, AND POINTED OUT THAT THE SITES ARE NORWEGIAN PROPERTY, REMAIN UNDER NORWEGIAN CONTROL, AND ARE MANAGED BY NORWEGIAN PERSONNEL. THE SUPPLIES BELONG TO THE MEMBER COUNTRIES WHO HAVE PAID FOR STORING THEM, BUT REDISTRIBUTION, REMOVAL, OR OTHER DISPOSITION OF SUPPLIES CAN ONLY TAKE PLACE UNDER AGREEMENT WITH NORWAY. THE STORES ARE INTENDED, FOSTERVOLL SAID, FOR NORWEGIAN FORCES AND NATO FORCES WHICH IN A WAR SITUATION WOULD COME TO NORWAY, AT THE REQUEST OF THE NORWEGIAN GOVERNMENT, IN ORDER TO AID IN THE DEFENSE OF NORWAY. HE CONCLUDED THAT, "THE EVENTUAL PARTICIPATION OF FOREIGN FORCES IN THE DEFENSE OF OUR COUNTRY IS OF COURSE ALWAYS DEPENDENT ON THE DECISION OF THE GOVERNMENT SITTING AT THAT TIME."

4. COMMENT: IN APRIL 4 DISCUSSION WITH DCM, HIMLE EXPRESSED UNHAPPINESS WITH THE WEST GERMAN WHITE PAPER AND ITS MAP SHOWING "BASES" IN NORWAY; HE CITED THE SV'S USE OF THIS MAP AS ONE OF THE PROBLEMS THE NORWEGIANS FACE IN OUR DISCUSSIONS OF "COLLOCATED OPERATING BASES" IN NORWAY, AND POINTED TO THE NEED FOR MAXIMUM DISCRETION IN THE FORTHCOMING NEGOTIATIONS.

5. MS. AAS RETURNED WITH A SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION AS TO WHETHER HAAKONSVERN NAVAL BASE IN BERGEN, ONE OF THE DEPOTS SHOWN IN THE GERMAN WHITE PAPER, RECEIVES VISITS BY FOREIGN NAVAL
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VESSELS WITH NUCLEAR WEAPONS ON BOARD. FOSTERVOLL'S ANSWER WAS A FIRM "NO".

6. A FINAL QUESTION FROM SV MEMBER ARNE KIELAND WAS ABOUT FOSTERVOLL'S ALLEGED CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE NATO NUCLEAR PLANNING GROUP. FOSTERVOLL POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS THE EUROGROUP, NOT THE NPG, THAT HE CHAIRS (COMMENT: KIELAND PROBABLY KNEW THIS, BUT HIS QUESTION POINTS TO THE LIKELIHOOD OF AN ATTEMPT BY SV TO CREATE UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY IN CONNECTION WITH THE NPG MINISTERIAL MEETING IN BERGEN IN JUNE). BYRNE

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